

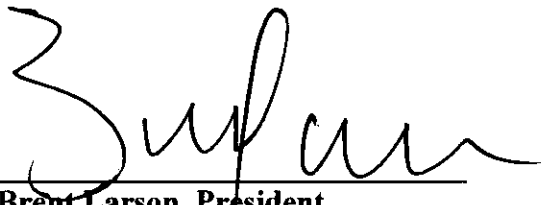
ORDER: ACCEPT AND EXECUTE 2024-2025 INTERLOCAL AGREEMENT FOR FUNDING EARLY CHILDHOOD AND READING DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

Motion was made by Tim Gordon, duly seconded by Scott Allen, to accept and execute 2024-2025 Interlocal Agreement for Funding Early Childhood and Reading Development Program.

The vote on the motion was as follows:

Supervisor Brent Larson, voted yes
Supervisor John Morgan, voted yes
Supervisor Tim Gordon, voted yes
Supervisor Scott Allen, voted yes
Supervisor Greg Bynum, voted yes

After the vote, President Larson, declared the motion carried, this the 3rd day of June, 2024.



**Brent Larson, President
Board of Supervisors**



Mike Roberts, Chancery Clerk

**2024-2025 INTERLOCAL AGREEMENT FOR FUNDING OF EARLY
CHILDHOOD AND READING DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM**

THIS AGREEMENT is entered into by and between the Lafayette County School District (“LCSD”), the Oxford School District (“OSD”), the City of Oxford, Mississippi (“the City”), and Lafayette County, Mississippi (“the County”), for the purpose of funding the Early Childhood and Reading Development Program (“the Program”) to support the educational missions of LCSD and OSD.

WHEREAS, the Interlocal Cooperation Act of 1974 authorizes any two or more local governmental units to enter into a written contractual agreement with one another to jointly provide services and facilities and to jointly exercise and carry out power, authority, or responsibility exercised or capable of being exercised by a local governmental unit; and

WHEREAS, OSD, LCSD, the City, and the County are local governmental units as defined by MISS. CODE ANN. § 17-13-5(a) and are each governed by a Governing Authority as defined by MISS. CODE ANN. § 17-13-5(b).

NOW, THEREFORE, pursuant to the provisions of the Interlocal Cooperation Act of 1974, and the approval of the parties’ respective governing authorities, the parties do hereby adopt this Agreement:

1. The parties hereby agree to jointly provide for the continuation of an Early Childhood and Literacy Development Program for the purpose of improving educational outcomes for children in Lafayette County, continuing an early intervention program to promote child growth and development, expanding early learning opportunities in the Oxford and Lafayette County community, and developing strategies to address school readiness, school attendance, and

summer learning.

2. The parties agree that the Oxford School District shall be responsible for the supervisory and administrative oversight of operations and personnel of the Program and shall serve as its fiscal agent. The parties each agree to provide \$25,000 per school year to fund the operation of the Program. As fiscal agent, OSD will annually invoice LCSD, the City, and the County, for their respective contributions. The City and the County shall have no further obligations or responsibilities under this Agreement.

3. The parties understand that OSD hired a Director of Early Childhood and Reading Development ("Director") in July 2017, based on recommendations brought forth by a joint search committee appointed by the superintendents of OSD and LCSD. The Director is a full-time certified position employed by and provided appropriate facilities by OSD. The Director's salary will be funded by \$25,000 given by each party.

4. The parties understand that OSD hired a School Readiness Coordinator in July 2019, based on recommendations brought forth by a joint search committee appointed by the superintendents of OSD and LCSD. This position is a part-time certified position employed by and provided appropriate facilities by OSD. The School Readiness Coordinator's salary will be funded through donations to the L.O.U Early Learning Collaborative. The parties' intent is that the School Readiness Coordinator position will be funded as a part-time certified position only when donations to the L.O.U Early Learning Collaborative exceed the amount of \$100,000 during the prior academic year.

5. This agreement shall be effective on the date the agreement is approved by the Attorney General and shall expire on June 30th, 2025. If the parties desire to renew the

agreement, each party shall give written notice of its intent to exercise its option to renew the agreement sixty (60) days before expiration of the initial term of the agreement.

6. This agreement is effective subject to the approval of the Attorney General of the State of Mississippi.

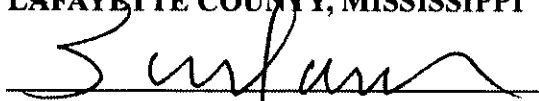
SIGNED and AGREED to, this the _____ day of _____, 2024.
OXFORD SCHOOL DISTRICT

President


Secretary

SIGNED and AGREED to, this the 3rd day of June, 2024.

LAFAYETTE COUNTY, MISSISSIPPI



President, Board of Supervisors



County Administrator

SIGNED and AGREED to, this the _____ day of _____, 2024.

CITY OF OXFORD, MISSISSIPPI

Mayor

City Clerk

**Early Childhood and Reading Development Partnership with
Oxford School District-Lafayette County School District-City of Oxford-Lafayette County
Progress Report
February-April 2024**

Prepared by: Cara Buffington, Director of Early Childhood and Reading Development

A. PROJECT SUMMARY

The community partnership will build an Early Childhood and Reading Development Program in the Lafayette County and Oxford Community dedicated to ensuring that all children can read proficiently by the end of third grade. The Early Childhood and Reading Development Program will build and strengthen community partnerships in the areas of school readiness, school attendance, out of school learning opportunities, and children's health and wellness.

B. STATUS OF ACTIVITIES DURING THE REPORTING PERIOD

February 2024	
Collaboration Partners for the Month:	
United Way of Oxford and Lafayette County	LOU Reads
Oxford School District (OSD)	Lafayette County School District (LCSD)
Mary Cathey Head Start (MCHS)	Willie Price Lab School (WPLS)
MS Department of Education (MDE)	MS Campaign for Grade-Level Reading (MSCGLR)
Second Chance, Inc./Lynndy Hurdle	Local Child Care Centers/Preschools
Bezos Foundation- Mind in the Making	Second Chance MS
Center for Excellence in Literacy Instruction (CELI)	University of Mississippi Center for Community and Engagement
Activities/Events:	
ESL Class meets Mondays and Wednesdays throughout the month	
CELI Meeting via ZOOM (Feb. 1)	
Director's Training at Insight Park (Feb. 2)	
Mississippi Reads One Book (Feb. 5)	
Campaign for Grade Level Reading State Meeting in Jackson (Feb. 6)	
Volunteer Fair at University of Mississippi (Feb. 13)	
United Way Meeting via ZOOM (Feb. 14)	
Mind In the Making Training at Insight Park (Feb. 15)	
Lead Partner Meeting for LOU ELC at Oxford Early Childhood Center (Feb. 20)	
PLC for LOU Early Learning Collaborative via ZOOM (Feb. 27)	

March 2024

Collaboration Partners for the Month:

United Way of Oxford and Lafayette County	LOU Reads
Oxford School District (OSD)	Lafayette County School District (LCSD)
Mary Cathey Head Start (MCHS)	Willie Price Lab School (WPLS)
MS Department of Education (MDE)	MS Campaign for Grade-Level Reading (MSCGLR)
Bezos Foundation- Mind in the Making	Northwest Community College
Second Chance, Inc./Lynndy Hurdle	University of Mississippi Cub Lab
UM School of Education	North MS Resource and Referral Center
Center for Excellence in Literacy (CELI)	Lafayette County Literacy Council (LCLC)

Activities/Events:

- ESL Class meets Mon./Wed. throughout the month
- "Read Across America" Week (Mar. 4-8)
- State Meeting United Way in Jackson (Mar. 4)
- Mind In The Making Training at Insight Park (Mar. 5)
- Planning Meeting for "Roll and Read" Event at Insight Park (Mar. 6)
- Friends of the Library Meeting (Mar. 7)
- Federal Programs Audit (March 8)
- Campaign for Grade Level Reading Training-Family Engagement Strategies (Mar. 12)
- Begin Brigance assessments for all LOU ELC (March. 18)
- OSD Admin. Meeting (Mar. 21)
- Nursery Rhyme Centers at OECC (Mar. 22)
- Meeting with Dr. Gray and 2nd Chance (Mar. 22)
- CELI Meeting (Mar. 26)
- LOU ELC PLC Meeting (Mar. 26)
- MSIS 2.0 Meeting via Zoom (Mar. 27)
- Lafayette Pre-K Field Trip to Bull Bottom Farms (Mar. 28)

April 2024

Collaboration Partners for the Month:

United Way of Oxford and Lafayette County

LOU Reads

Oxford School District (OSD)

Lafayette County School District (LCSD)

Mary Cathey Head Start (MCHS)

Willie Price Lab School (WPLS)

MS Department of Education (MDE)

Northwest MS Resource and Referral Center

Center for Excellence in Literacy Instruction (CELI)

Northwest Community College

Second Chance, Inc.

Leapfrog of Lafayette County

Bezos Foundation - MITM

UM School of Education

UM School of Education

Junior Auxiliary of Oxford (Crown Club)

Lafayette County Literacy Council (LCLC)

Lafayette County and Oxford Library

Oxford Community Market (OXCM)

University of Mississippi Cub Lab

Activities/Events:

ESL Class meets Mon./Wed. throughout the month

Mississippi Kindergarten Readiness Assessment for all LOU ELC sites

Completed FY 24-25 United Way Application (Apr 1)

"Roll and Read" Literacy Event at The Old Armory Pavilion (April 11)

Mississippi Day at University of Mississippi (April 13)

Mary Cathey Head Start Center Parent Meeting (April 16)

Oxford Community Market-Literacy Bus and Book Giveaway (April 16)

LOU Reads Spring Coalition Meeting at Insight Park (April 18)

LeapFrog Truckapalooza at Lafayette County Multipurpose Center (April 20)

Festival of Nations - Book Giveaway at Oxford High School (April 23)

Lead Partner Meeting for LOU ELC at Oxford Early Childhood Center (April 23)

Meeting with CELI (April 29)

Visit to Pontotoc Elementary School to view MS Beginnings-New Pre-K Curriculum (April 30)

C. PROGRAM GOALS FOR NEXT REPORTING PERIOD (May - July 2024)

Goals
Completion of MDE Monitoring Documentation for LOU ELC
Completion of ESL Class in May
Create Summer Fun and Learning Activities Guide for Parents-May
Continued support of PreK classrooms in our Lafayette-Oxford-University Early Learning Collaborative (LOU ELC)- 27 classrooms
Recruit family members of LOU ELC PreK Classrooms for the Career Advancement Program (CAP)
Analyze MKAS data from 2023-2024 school year (Section E)
Analyze Brigance data from 2023-2024 school year
Plan activities for National Summer Learning Week July 15-19, 2024
Plan Mind in the Making Trainings- Leaders across the state are discussing the best plan of action to bring the training to communities throughout the state.
Continue to promote efforts of LOU Reads through our website and social media
Continue to Promote PreK Tax Credit for the LOU ELC (Section F)

D. Upcoming Events

Events/Info
<p>Literacy Bus Stops and Book Giveaways</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● June 3 – Summer Meal Program and Boys and Girls Club @ Central Elementary School ● June 20 – LCSD Summer School @ Lafayette Upper Elementary School ● June 24 – OSD Summer School @ Central Elementary School ● July 23 – Oxford Community Market @ Old Armory Pavilion ● July 25 – YMCA @ Della Davidson Elementary School
Lead Partner Meeting in Natchez for Early Learning Collaborative (June 17)
LOU Reads Summer Coalition Meeting at Insight Park (July 11)
NOTE: For up-to-date info and pics, follow LOU Reads on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram - @loureads38655

E. MKAS Scores for LOU ELC sites for 2023-2024

There is only a spring benchmark score for Pre-K students, which is a scale score of 498. Students in the LOU ELC are expected to have a minimum scale score of 498 or a gain of 98 scale score points.

Site	Fall 2023		Spring 2024	
	At/Above 498	Average Scale Score	At/Above 498	Average Scale Score
LOU ELC	20%	426	74%	569
OECC	22%	429	76%	590
LES	14.3%	411	70.8%	542
MCHS	4.2%	397	43.5%	477
WPLS	37.1%	473	91.2%	568

****NOTE:** The LOU ELC will receive their Rate of Readiness from MDE this summer (see below-rate of readiness determination).

Rate of Readiness Scores

The **school/site** score will be measured through the MKAS2 scores, Brigance Screen III, and CLASS rating. **Each site** will receive a score based on a 100 point scale. MKAS2 scores will receive up to 25 points, Brigance scores will receive up to 25 points, and the CLASS rating will receive up to 50 points. For school/sites with more than one classroom, all of the CLASS scores will be averaged.

School/site score breakdown by assessment tool:

A.	MKAS² Scoring Average percent of district school site children meeting 498	Percentage of children that meet 498 by the end of the year OR Percent of children that demonstrate an average point gain of 98 per site	0-29% = 0 points 30-49% = 8 points 50-65% = 15 points 66-100% = 25 points OR 0-24% = 0 points 25-39% = 8 points 40-49% = 15 points 50-100% = 25 points
B.	Brigance Screen III	To be determined based on the pilot year of Brigance utilized in the Early Learning Collaboratives.*	Up to 25 points
C.	CLASS Ranges • Low = 1 - 2 • Mid = 3 - 5 • High = 6 - 7	Meet an average of a 5 and a minimum of 2.8 in the Instructional Support domain	1.00-2.99 = 0 points 3.00-3.99 = 15 points 4.00-4.99 = 30 points 5.00-7.00 & ≤2.8 IS = 30 points 5.00-7.00 & ≥2.8 IS = 50 points
Site Score (A+B+C)			

*Percentage, point gain, and all corresponding point ranges will be determined prior to implementation.

Rate of Readiness Determination

The rate of readiness is assigned based on the **site score** achieved. The point breakdown for the rate of readiness is as follows:

- **Successful:** site score of 70+ points
- **Probation:** site score of 69 points and below (The first year in this category initiates a one year probationary period. After the first probationary year, the partner site has to score 70+ points to continue funding.)
- **Non-eligible:** site score of 69 and below and has been on probation for one year

Collaborative Rate of Readiness

It is expected that **each site** within a collaborative would achieve a successful score. If a site does not meet the criteria for a successful score, the site will move into a probationary period. During the probationary year, the program will develop a plan for improvement and receive technical assistance to support growth. If the probationary year is complete and the site still does not achieve a successful score, then the program becomes non-eligible for collaborative funding. If a collaborative lead site moves into the second year of probation and becomes non-eligible, then another eligible partner site will take over as the lead program.

F. Mississippi PreK Tax Credit Information

We received **\$30,000.00** in MS PreK Tax Credit donations so far in 2024.

Use of Funds:

- Numerous instructional supplies for all 27 classrooms
- Professional Learning (online and in-person) for teachers, assistants, and administrators
- Books for Pre-K students
- Field Trips for Lafayette and Oxford Pre-K Classes
- Get Ready for Kindergarten Kits for current PreK Students
- Materials and Incentives for ESL Class, Tuition for parents of Pre-K students in CAP program (Jan-May 2024)

Early Learning

History OF THE PRE-K TAX CREDIT

In 2013, the State of Mississippi took an historic step by passing the Early Learning Collaborative Act. The law established a collaborative delivery, state-funded pre-K program in which private or parochial schools, private childcare centers, and/or Head Start centers may join with a local public school district and compete for state funds in order to provide pre-kindergarten services to a specific community. All funded collaboratives must adhere to state regulations requiring that they meet nationally recognized standards of quality.

Under the Early Learning Collaborative Act of 2013, individuals or corporations who make a contribution to support the local matching fund of an approved early learning collaborative may be eligible to receive a state tax credit for the donated amount up to \$1,000,000.

HOW CAN INDIVIDUALS & CORPORATIONS HELP?

The Pre-K Tax Credit is unique because any individual or business paying state taxes can qualify if they make a proper donation to an approved collaborative.

Under the Early Learning Collaborative Act of 2013, the costs for providing pre-kindergarten services to four-year-old children amount to \$5,000 per child enrolled in full-day programs and \$2,500 per child enrolled in half-day programs. The State of Mississippi provides half of these costs (\$2,500 per child enrolled in full-day pre-K and \$1,250 per child enrolled in half-day pre-K). However, the State requires that the other half be provided by local matching funds, which may include local tax dollars, federal dollars (as allowed), parent tuition, philanthropic contributions, or in-kind donations of facilities, equipment, and services required as part of the program, such as food service or health screenings. Individuals or businesses who are interested in donating can help ensure early learning collaboratives can provide high-quality care by donating to their local matching funds.

Pre-K Tax Credit HOW IT WORKS

Each legislative session, the legislature determines how much funding is invested into the Early Learning Collaborative Act of 2013. In 2023, the state maintained its \$24 million investment in pre-K. Donations to all collaboratives are capped at the amount appropriated by the legislature to the collaborative program in a given year. Since the fiscal year and the calendar year do not align, the Mississippi Department of Education (MDE) averages the appropriation amounts across fiscal years within a calendar year. However, because the legislature appropriated \$24 million in both 2022 and 2023, the tax credit cap for 2023 is also \$24 million.

\$24 MILLION
is the 2023 appropriation
for the Early Learning
Collaborative Act.

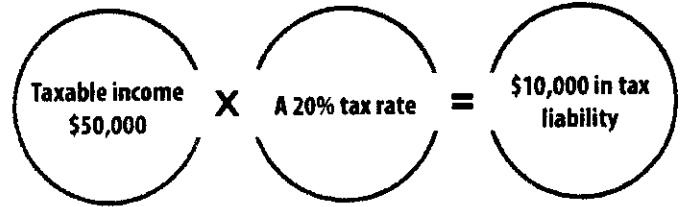
The sum of donations
eligible for the tax credit
may not exceed
\$24 million.



Understanding THE PRE-K TAX CREDIT

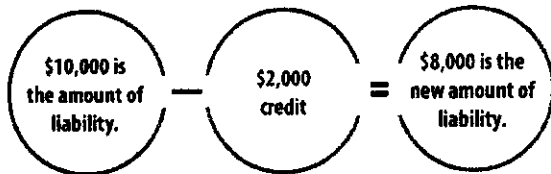
Tax credits are often confused with tax deductions. Tax deductions reduce the amount of your taxable income (what you earned), while tax credits reduce your tax liability (what you owe).

Without any credits or deductions, this is how tax liability is calculated with a income of \$50,000 and a tax rate of 20%.



How Tax Credits Work

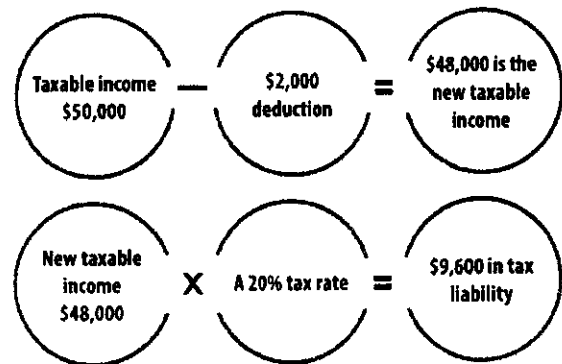
A tax credit of \$2,000



With a tax credit, you apply the credit directly to your liability.

How Tax Deductions Work

A tax deduction of \$2,000



Securing THE TAX CREDIT

THE STEPS YOU CAN TAKE TO DONATE TO A COLLABORATIVE AND RECEIVE A STATE TAX CREDIT

- 1
- 2
- 3

The tax credit is first come, first served based on the date of a qualifying donation. First, contact the lead partner for the collaborative to which you wish to donate. See below for your local approved early learning collaborative, along with contact information for the person responsible for collecting donations. MDE tracks qualifying donations towards the cap. When contacting the lead partner, verify that the tax credit cap has not been reached. If the program is nearing the cap, a donor can request that MDE "hold" the contribution spot for 30 days, pending the documentation of the donation, to ensure the donor's place in line for the credit.

After you make a donation, MDE will issue you a donation certificate documenting that you have contributed to the local matching funds of an approved collaborative. This documentation preserves your place in line to claim the tax credit.

Indicate your donation when you file your state taxes. Use form 80-401, which can be found on the Department of Revenue's website. The Department of Revenue will verify your donation with MDE.

Invest in Pre-K
YOUR NEXT STEPS

Support Mississippi kids by investing in the early learning providers who work endlessly to provide high-quality education to those who need it the most. Your support will allow Mississippi's state-funded pre-K program to continue to grow and grant more Mississippi kids access to excellent early childhood education.

Cara Buffington | Lafayette University Oxford Early Learning Collaborative
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